Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (*Previously Presented*) A method of allocating a prize using a gaming apparatus, including: a primary controller for determining the award of a prize; and a plurality of auxiliary controllers capable of communication with the primary controller, the auxiliary controllers being further capable of communication with a respective set of one or more gaming terminals, comprising:

at each auxiliary controller:

receiving data from one or more of its respective set of gaming terminals, the data including at least one gaming terminal identifier and associated gaming terminal accumulated amount;

storing the data in a memory accessible to the auxiliary controller;

deriving a total contributory amount in response to the gaming terminal accumulated amounts; and

communicating the total contributory amount to the primary controller;

at the primary controller:

receiving the total contributory amounts from the auxiliary controllers;

processing each total contributory amount to update a contributory revenue value;

determining whether to award a prize when the contributory revenue value reaches a trigger value;

identifying a particular one of the total contributory amounts that caused the total contributory revenue to reach the trigger value; and

identifying the particular one of the auxiliary controllers that provided the particular total contributory amount;

wherein a determination to award a prize is caused by a particular one of the total contributory amounts from a particular one of the auxiliary controllers;

if a prize is determined to be awarded, communicating data associated with the determination to award the prize to the particular one of the auxiliary controllers; and

at the particular one of the auxiliary controllers:

analyzing the data associated with the determination and the data stored in the memory to determine a particular one of the gaming machine accumulated amounts that caused the total contributory revenue to reach the trigger value;

identifying a particular one of the gaming terminals that provided the particular one of the gaming machine accumulated amounts; and

determining that a prize is to be allocated to that particular one of the gaming terminals.

2. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 including deriving a respective contributory amount in response to each gaming terminal accumulated amount.

3. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 including deriving a total accumulated amount in response to the gaming terminal accumulated amounts.

4. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 3 wherein the total contributory amount comprises a portion of the total accumulated amount.

5. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 3 wherein the total contributory amount comprises any one of a proportion, fraction or percentage of the total accumulated amount.

6. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 5 further comprising comparing a portion of the total accumulated amount and the total accumulated amount to determine the proportion, fraction or percentage.

7. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein the auxiliary controllers communicates with the primary controller via a wide area network having a bandwidth of less than or equal to 10,000 bits per second.

8. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein the auxiliary controllers communicates with the gaming terminals via a local area network having a bandwidth approximately equal to 10 mega bits per second.

9. Cancelled

10. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein the auxiliary controllers and the primary controller are geographically separate and each of the auxiliary controllers is disposed at a separate venues.

11. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 further comprising communicating a respective auxiliary controller identifier from each auxiliary controller to the primary controller.

12. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein the step of storing the data in a memory accessible to the auxiliary controller includes storing a list of the gaming terminal identifiers and the associated gaming terminal accumulated amounts ordered chronologically as received by the auxiliary controller.

13. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein each auxiliary controller maintains an inventory of gaming terminal identifiers and is responsive to a signal from the primary controller for transmitting changes in the inventory to the primary controller.

14. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 further comprising, at each auxiliary controller, communicating a contributory amount to the primary controller once for each predefined polling period.

15. (*Original*) A method according to claim 14 wherein the predefined polling period is at least 2 seconds.

16. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 14 wherein the predefined polling period is at least 1 second.

17. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 including the step of communicating a win message from the particular one of the auxiliary controllers to the gaming terminal to which the prize is to be allocated.

18. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 including the step of communicating a win message from the auxiliary controller to the primary controller.

19. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein the method is performed at least once every 5 seconds.

20. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein the method is performed at least once every 2 to 3 seconds.

21. (*Previously Presented*) A method according to claim 1 wherein the gaming terminals include at least one of:

a poker machine;

a point of sale register;

a mobile phone;

a personal computer;

an access control point; and

a television.

22. (*Previously Presented*) An apparatus for allocating a prize, the apparatus including:

a primary controller, a plurality of auxiliary controllers and a plurality of gaming terminals,

each auxiliary controller having:

first communication means for receipt of data from a respective set of one or more of the gaming terminals, the data including one or more gaming terminal identifier and associated gaming terminal accumulated amounts,

a memory for storage of the data;

a processor for deriving a total contributory amount from the gaming terminal accumulated amount; and

second communication means for communication to the primary controller of the total contributory amount;

the primary controller having:

a comparator for determining whether to award a prize based at least in part upon one or more of the total contributory amounts received from one or more of the auxiliary controllers, and

a processor for

processing each total contributory amount to update a contributory revenue value,

determining to award a prize caused by a particular one of the total contributory amounts from a particular one of the auxiliary controllers when the contributory revenue value reaches a trigger value,

identifying a particular one of the total contributory amounts that caused the total contributory revenue to reach the trigger value, and

identifying the particular one of the auxiliary controllers that provided the particular total contributory amount; and

the second communication means communicating data associated with the determination to the particular one of the auxiliary controllers that caused the total contributory revenue to reach the trigger value;

wherein the particular one of the auxiliary controllers is responsive to the data associated with the determination and the data stored in the memory so as to determine which particular one of the gaming terminals associated with the particular one of the auxiliary controllers caused the prize to be awarded, and to determine that a prize is to be allocated to that particular one of the gaming terminals.

23. (*Previously* Presented) An apparatus according to claim 22 wherein the first communication means comprises a local area network and the second communication means comprises a wide area network.

24. (*Previously Presented*) A method of allocating a prize in a gaming system having a primary controller, a plurality of auxiliary controllers and, for each auxiliary controller, a respective set of one or more a plurality of gaming terminals, comprising:

at each auxiliary controller:

collating and storing data indicative of accumulated amounts associated with one or more of its respective set of gaming terminals;

calculating a total contributory amount; and

communicating the total contributory amount to the primary controller;

at the primary controller,

determining whether to award a prize based on data associated with the determination, wherein a determination to award a prize is caused by a particular one of the total contributory amounts from a particular one of the auxiliary controllers when the total contributory amounts reach a contributory revenue trigger value;

identifying a particular one of the total contributory amounts that caused the total contributory revenue to reach the trigger value;

identifying the particular one of the auxiliary controllers that provided the particular total contributory amount; and

determining whether to award a prize based upon one or more of the total contributory amounts received from one or more of the auxiliary controllers;

communicating the data associated with a determination to award a prize to the particular one of the auxiliary controllers;

at the particular one of the auxiliary controllers, determining a particular one of the gaming machine accumulated amounts that caused the total contributory revenue to reach the trigger value;

identifying a particular one of the gaming terminals that provided the particular one of the gaming machine accumulated amounts; and

determining that a prize is to be allocated to that particular one of the gaming terminals.